



THE BECERRA BULLETIN

News and Views from Washington to Los Angeles

JULY 14, 2006, WASHINGTON, D.C. — In a continued effort to bring news and relevant information about our federal government back to his home district in Los Angeles, Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), the only congressional member from Southern California who is on the House Ways and Means Committee, brings you "The Becerra Bulletin," an e-newsletter filled with facts and information meant to stimulate thought and discussion about American economic policy and a host of other issues.

BY THE NUMBERS

MINIMUM WAGE REMAINS STAGNANT AS COST OF LIVING RISES

Over the past decade, members of Congress have approved a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for themselves on par with the rate of inflation, while leaving the federal minimum wage unchanged. The federal minimum wage is now at its lowest level in 50 years when adjusted for inflation, and has not been increased since 1997. To put it in perspective, it now takes a full day's pay for a minimum wage earner to pay for just one tank of gas. Roughly three-quarters of minimum wage workers, 4.7 million, are adults over the age of 20, and many are responsible for over half of their family's income. Raising the minimum wage would benefit approximately 6.6 million people, including hundreds of thousands of parents with children under the age of 18. We must take this country in a new direction and it starts with raising the minimum wage.

Here's what we know:

	Federal Minimum Wage	California Minimum Wage	Annual Inflation Rate	Average Cost of a Gallon of Gas	Congress' Cost of Living Adjustment
2006	\$5.15	\$6.75	N/A	\$2.99	N/A
2005	\$5.15	\$6.75	3%	\$1.87	4.1%
2004	\$5.15	\$6.75	2.3%	\$1.64	2.7%
2003	\$5.15	\$6.75	2.5%	\$1.56	2.1%
2002	\$5.15	\$6.75	1.3%	\$1.21	1.4%
2001	\$5.15	\$6.25	3.4%	\$1.53	2.6%
2000	\$5.15	\$5.75	3.3%	\$1.36	3.5%
1999	\$5.15	\$5.75	1.9%	\$1.03	2.5%
1998	\$5.15	\$5.75	1.5%	\$1.17	1.3%
1997	\$5.15	\$5.00	2.6%	\$1.32	2.1%

SHORT TAKES — WASHINGTON, D.C.

LATINO MUSEUM LEGISLATION REPORTED FAVORABLY AND WILL SOON MOVE TO THE HOUSE FLOOR

H.R. 2134, the Commission to Study the Potential Creation of a National Museum of the American Latino Community Act, was unanimously voted out of the Committee on Resources Wednesday, June 21, during the committee's markup. This action by the committee all but ensures future passage by the House of Representatives. When signed into law, Rep. Becerra's bill will set up a 23 member commission charged with producing a national conference to bring stakeholders, experts, policymakers and other interested parties together to discuss the museum's viability; a fundraising plan to create an extensive public-private partnership; and a report to Congress detailing a recommended plan of action on how to move forward with taking the museum from concept to reality. All this will occur within 18 months of the bill's passage. This commission will be the first step toward creating a new national museum in the nation's capital that is dedicated to portraying the art, history, and culture of the Latino population of the United States — ensuring that the mosaic portrayed in Washington's museums truly reflects America.

SHORT TAKES — LOS ANGELES

REP. BECERRA ATTENDS BORDER HEARING IN SAN DIEGO

Congressman Becerra attended and participated in a congressional field hearing in San Diego July 5. Called by the Republican leadership of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Nonproliferation, the hearing's aim was to discuss immigration reform as it relates to border security. Rep. Becerra called attention to the need for Congress to stop wasting taxpayer dollars on politically charged hearings, and start working toward a realistic solution to our border security and immigration challenges. "This Congress has failed to deliver anything meaningful to the American people," Rep. Becerra said. "And I fear that the only result [of these hearings] is another year of a do-nothing Republican Congress that cares little for Americans and refuses to take a positive new direction toward comprehensive immigration reform."

Representative Xavier Becerra, 31st Congressional District, California

Committee on Ways and Means

Subcommittee on Human Resources & Subcommittee on Social Security

DISTRICT OFFICE: 1910 Sunset Blvd., #560, Los Angeles, CA 90026, 213.483.1425

CAPITOL OFFICE: 1119 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515, 202.225.6235

becerra.house.gov

